Concert
Club
...dead?
11 // 25
(how do we seek community
in a digital world?)

If you want to see the full interviews with Franco and Natalia, scan the QR code on the back!

This zine has a full companion video on YouTube, which you can find at @cjcentral_

Have YOU! been personally victimized by?

Urgent		Done
☐	1. STAGE RUSHING	☐
☐	2. LINE CUTTING	☐
☐	3. DROPPING CROWDSURFERS	☐
☐	4. MID-SET TALKING	☐
☐	5. NON STOP FILMING	☐
☐	6. THROWING ITEMS ON STAGE	☐
☐	7. SHOVING TO BARRICADE	☐
☐	8. YELLING AT ARTISTS	☐
☐	9. NO DEODORANT	☐
☐	10.	

NOTES:

I know that I'm not the only person that's noticed people acting worse at concerts. I definitely go to more shows than the average person, so maybe I'm exposed to it more often.

Even as an avid concert-goer, I still get shocked every time someone yells references mid-song or seeing friend groups shoving and trampling people to get to barricade.

But when you see articles and posts talking about people throwing shit at artists, jumping fences to rush at stages or even just filming themselves with flash, you can't help but feel like no one knows how to act in public anymore.

franco
concert veteran

to learn what's plaguing young people at concerts, i asked...

What would you define as good concert etiquette?

F: Dependent on community... It's about making the concert as enjoyable as possible, not just for you, but for everyone around you.

N: Being cognizant of your surroundings, and being able to read a room.

Have you felt the impact of bad concert etiquette from fellow concertgoers?

F: At Ken Carson [and] at 2hollis. Worst concerts of my life. I got vomitted on and I got sweat on so much.

N: Yeah... at [Will Wood] with you, and there were these 3 very tall men... and they like formed a wall basically. I asked one of them to scootch over a little bit... [him and his friend got annoyed,] and it got to the point where he was like frustrated, so he started elbowing me and blowing on my face.

Are there differences you have noticed between "good" and "bad" audiences?

F: Yeah- people were falling and no one would help you. Like I said, I got vomitted on 5 mins in... you're just packed in tightly so you can't move. It's bad because no one was trying to help anyone.

N: It definitely made me think that certain crowds/ genres attract certain people. Edgy attracts edgy.

Do you think social media has impacted how people treat eachother at concerts?

F: The [wall] of phones! I feel like social media is making everyone on their phones the entire concert. They honestly don't even care about the concert as much as they care about getting a good video, and being as close as possible [...] to then flex on people.

N: Any attention is good attention for some people. More and more people are losing their sense of social skills. And some people form parasocial relationships with the artists that they're seeing and feel like they can [act up], because they feel so tight with them.

natalia
2-time concertgoer

what's the WORD ON THE STREET?

Social media is truly a double edged sword. It has amazing benefits of introducing new music to audiences that might've never discovered it otherwise. It's also a way for fans to connect with other people who share the same interests.

However, it's also true that the pursuit of digital attention impacts how people act in public concert settings. A large part of poor concert etiquette comes from taking the fascination with capturing videos for sites like TikTok to the extreme, often at the detriment of the performers and audience around them.

But, the internet has impacted concert etiquette in another way- parasociality. "Parasocial relationships" seem to be the internet's favorite buzzword right now, but its impact is really felt on the music landscape. Now, more than ever, social media makes us feel more connected with our favorite artists. But, when people start treating strangers as if they are already friends, personal boundaries are crossed easier.

I've seen this affect musicians with an especially active online fanbase the most. It's a tight balancing act- a lot of these bands owe their success to blowing up on social media. Oftentimes their tight-knit fandom is what supports them financially and allows them to continue making their art. But there are countless horror stories of fans getting too invested in a musician's life to the point of stalking and endangering these artists. Now, it's obviously only a small group of people being the loud minority...

But why do overzealous fans, especially the younger-leaning, chronically-online ones, seem to be more likely to act disrespectfully?

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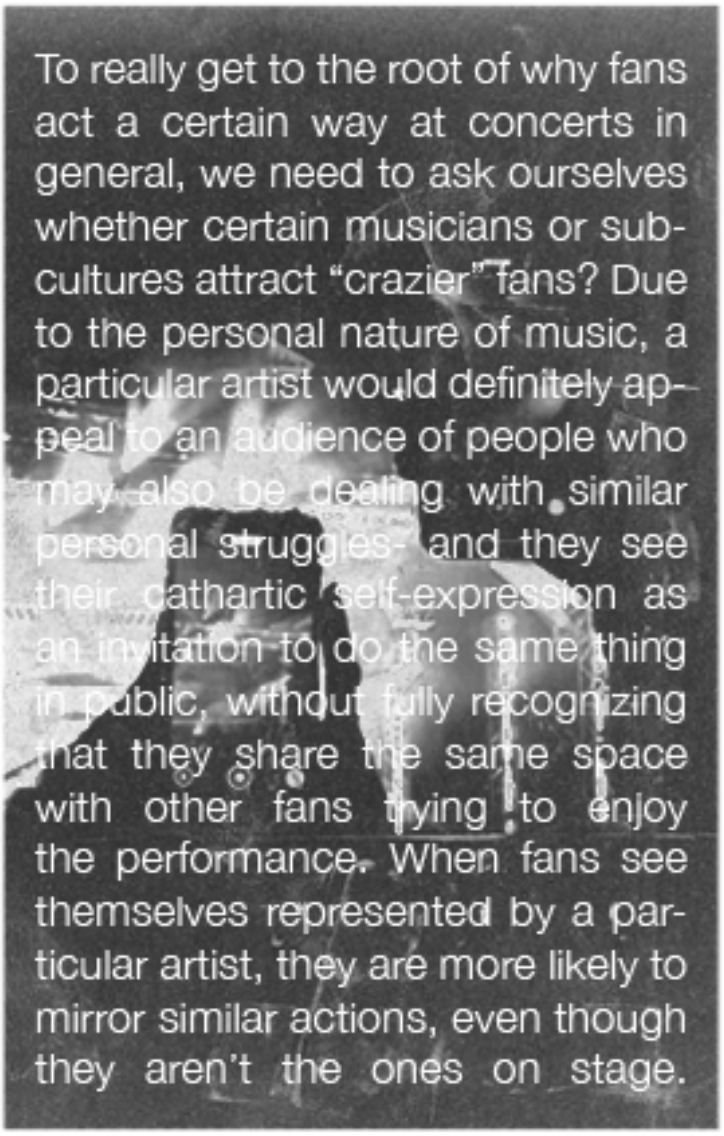
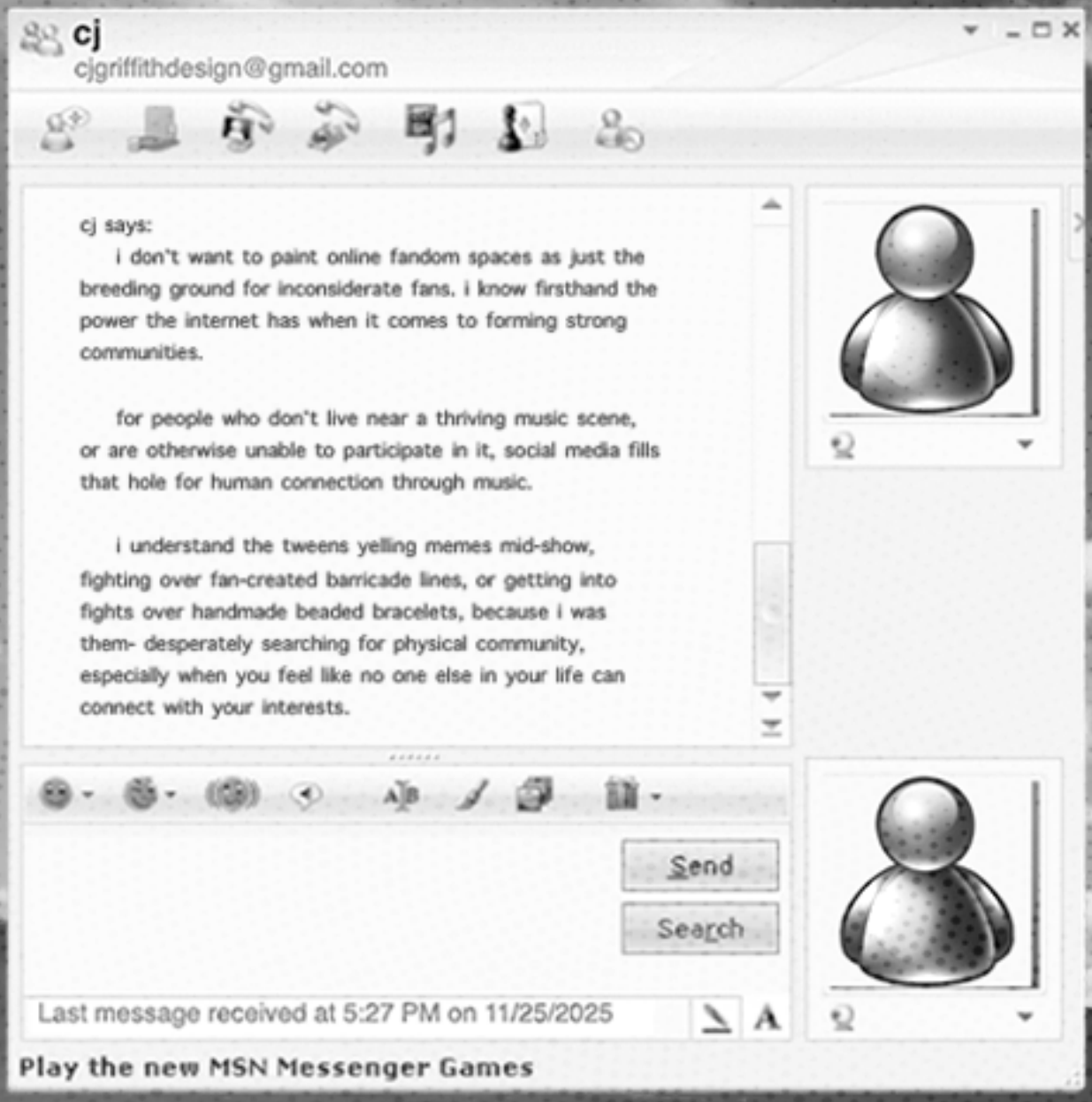


To really get to the root of why fans act a certain way at concerts in general, we need to ask ourselves whether certain musicians or sub-cultures attract "crazier" fans? Due to the personal nature of music, a particular artist would definitely appeal to an audience of people who may also be dealing with similar personal struggles- and they see their cathartic self-expression as an invitation to do the same thing in public, without fully recognizing that they share the same space with other fans trying to enjoy the performance. When fans see themselves represented by a particular artist, they are more likely to mirror similar actions, even though they aren't the ones on stage.


cj
cjgriffithdesign@gmail.com
cj says:
i don't want to paint online fandom spaces as just the breeding ground for inconsiderate fans. i know firsthand the power the internet has when it comes to forming strong communities.
for people who don't live near a thriving music scene, or are otherwise unable to participate in it, social media fills that hole for human connection through music.
i understand the tweens yelling memes mid-show, fighting over fan-created barricade lines, or getting into fights over handmade beaded bracelets, because i was them- desperately searching for physical community, especially when you feel like no one else in your life can connect with your interests.
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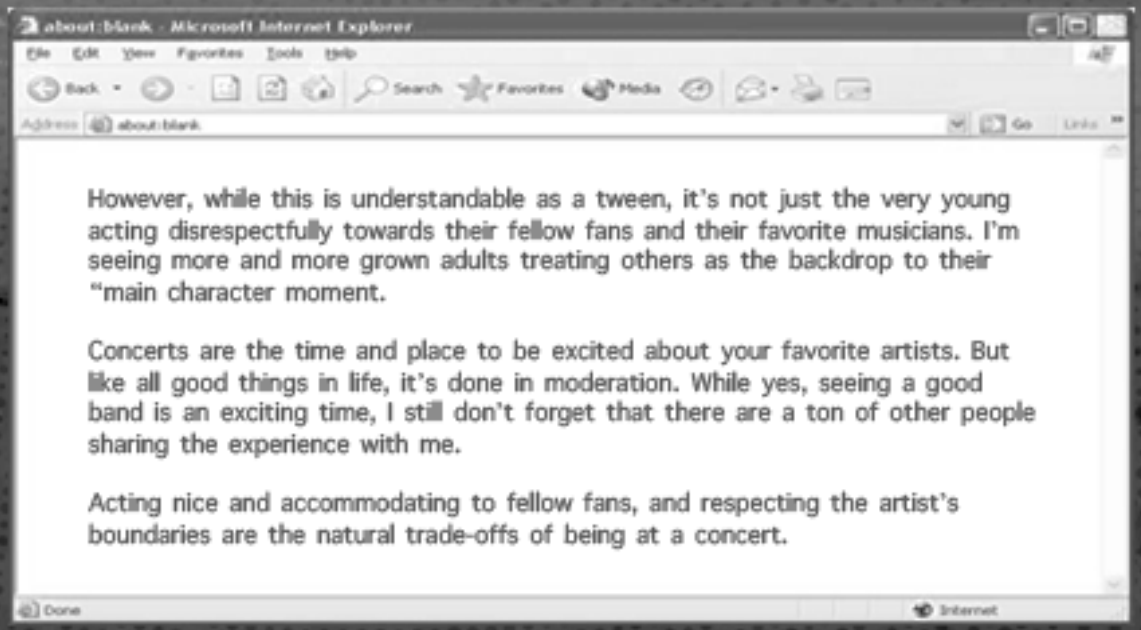
Play the new MSN Messenger Games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However, while this is understandable as a tween, it's not just the very young acting disrespectfully towards their fellow fans and their favorite musicians. I'm seeing more and more grown adults treating others as the backdrop to their "main character moment.
Concerts are the time and place to be excited about your favorite artists. But like all good things in life, it's done in moderation. While yes, seeing a good band is an exciting time, I still don't forget that there are a ton of other people sharing the experience with me.
Acting nice and accommodating to fellow fans, and respecting the artist's boundaries are the natural trade-offs of being at a concert.

What Can Be Done??

There's no right or wrong solution on how to fix bad concert etiquette, but there is definitely something we can do about it as a collective. The reason I made this zine is to work on the etiquette issue through connecting my local music scene further. I hope that my work will lead to fun and interesting conversations that will further unite this group of people that all share a similar passion.

When you get to know your other concert goers on a deeper personal level, it leads to more thoughtful and respectful behavior in our shared space. Instead of seeing others as competition to get the best spot in the venue, the mindset shifts to recognizing that each person deserves a good experience. Fostering connections and friendships eventually lead to building a stronger community- one where people care about each other and want to uplift each other's experience doing the thing we all are passionate about.

And with a deeper sense of unity within a group of seasoned concertgoers, we can have patience and learn to communicate warmly to newcomers who might not fully know concert etiquette yet. The community that concerts bring and the opportunity to introduce more people to the power of music is worth the etiquette issues that may come from inexperienced fans.

In navigating all of the intense emotional situations that a concert can bring, we're reminded that we all are human! We are messy and imperfect, but still deeply care about the deep and human connection that music brings us.

This obviously isn't a perfect solution, but reaching out and getting to know your scene better will help lead to a more welcoming and respectful environment, where we are free to express ourselves authentically. Connection can as simple as introducing yourself to a few new strangers. Who knows what impact that small action could make on those around you!

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